

Andorraverse Letter 9

*Andorra
Pett*



Murder and mayhem,
in space.

Hello and welcome to the ninth newsletter of 2026 from the Andorraverse. Your support is appreciated.

I hope you'll enjoy reading Andorra's adventures as much as I've enjoyed writing them.



If this is your first newsletter, let me explain how it all works. If you'd heard it all before, my apologies.

In these letters, I'll tell you a bit more about Andorra, where I got the ideas from, and give you some behind-the-scenes content.

By the way, if you've enjoyed your free novel, I'd be grateful for a review, or a rating.

You don't need to have bought the ebook on Amazon to leave a review or rating there.

[Review on Amazon](#)

[Review on Goodreads](#)

If you're not happy doing that, just reply to this email and tell me what you thought of it.

If you missed previous letters, you can access them here.

[The Andorraverse, Newsletter Archive](#)

Now that's out of the way, it's time to get on with this month's letter.



News.

In writing news, I'm determined to finish the first draft of *Whatever Happened to Andorra Pett?* by the end of September. This is so that my editor and beta team can take a look before the end of the year. To achieve this, September has been treated like a NaNoWriMo month.

I'm trying to write between 1600 and 2000 words a day, and I'm pleased to report that so far it's all going pretty well.

I know that I say this every month, but as a pantsier, I find the story develops and changes quite a lot while I write. Characters chip in with new information, scenes and dialogue lead to new plot strands, before you know it, you're miles (and pages) from where you started. Or thought you'd be.

As I said last time, ending up in Brighton was not on the radar when I started the series.

So, this novel's turned out to be a lot more complex than I thought, but we're getting there.

On the day I set this newsletter up to publish, my total stands at 27642 words.

I wanted it to be around 60000 by the end of the month. Which means I have a lot to do in the next twelve days.

I'll tell you how I got on next time.

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I have the first version of the cover to share with you.

The design harks back to 2016, and the first edition of her debut novel, *Andorra Pett and the Oort Cloud Café*.

For this cover, I'm using the same background and cover art that was designed for me at the time.



Let me know what you think.

*Andorra
Pett*

Also, thanks to everyone who bought a copy of *Are We There Yet?* that was advertised last month. It's much appreciated.

I hope you enjoyed a glimpse into Andorra's childhood. I have plans to expand on the short story about Andorra's life before she went to Saturn that I wrote earlier in the year.

Called *When Andi met Cy*, it was free in two earlier newsletters (see the archives for newsletters 2 and 3 if you're new here).

I think it has potential for a lot more about Andorra at college and her early career in Greenwich. Who knows, there may even be a crime or two for her to solve.



Extra Content.

Held over from last month, I'm discussing the worldbuilding that went into the space station off Saturn, Andorra's home for her first adventure.

For worldbuilding background, you can read my thoughts on Rubber Science (the art of making imaginary scenarios seem real) in this blog post.

<https://richarddeescifi.co.uk/new-branch-of-science/>

Once I'd decided that I wanted to set the story in a place that was as far from her home as it was possible for Andorra to get, the answer was obvious. A space station by the edge of Saturn's rings was the perfect small community to set an adventure with an accident prone, reluctant amateur detective. But I had to make it realistic. Not only that, I didn't want the science to overwhelm the story, which is just a fish-out-of-water finds her feet sort of thing.

The best way to build the station was to ask a simple question.

What would you need to live on a space station orbiting Saturn?

Obviously the novel was set in the future, as our current technology didn't really cut it for that kind of operation. Although it wasn't that far, I wanted to keep things simple, so no Light-Sabres, no Beam-me-up and no Aliens.

Naturally, there were a few things that needed glossing over, like actually building it, getting it there, and how the artificial gravity worked. I also needed to create a stable ecosystem on board.

But I did have enough real science to fall back on to make it seem real. I'd found a reason for it to be where it was and a way of making it self-sufficient.

As I said before, I'd already created parts of it. In my novel, *Ribbonworld* and short stories, *The Orbiting Livestock Company* and *Ring Miner*. All I had to do was bring it all together in one place.

Maybe one day I'll write a history of OLC and expand on all that. Anyway, the space station that Andora arrives on is a world of its own. It has to be. You can't supply it from Earth, it's just too far away. And when you think of what a world like that needs, there are a few basics that once they're provided make everything else follow. Before you have people, you need oxygen, food, water and a power source. The first two are interdependent. If you can import soil and start growing things, you'll produce oxygen and remove CO₂. If you start small, you can scale it up. The rings of Saturn can provide as much water as you need (which can also be cracked to obtain Oxygen) and methane for fuel, while humans can fertilise the soil. Give it a couple of years and you have a basic ecosystem.

In my mind, the station started as a basic mining facility, with a small farm to produce food and oxygen for the miners and the people running the operation. Over time, there will have been more and more bits added. Facilities for the university's observatory, increased leisure for the expanding population, etc etc.

To cut down on travelling time between the planets and the station, I invented a means of propulsion that was faster than our current system. Without anything detailed, just a name: the Centi-Drive. As

the name suggests, it allows travel at one per cent of light speed. This cuts journey times to a matter of days, depending on the relative positions of Saturn, Earth, Mars and the Moon. It also fits in with the slightly futuristic look I was going for.

Of course, once you have the basics, you can expand them to your heart's content. Adding little details can enhance the realism. Things like a recreation area on one of the farming decks, where you can picnic on the grass, or a special tank for growing Lobsters in space make the farm seem real. In other areas, a mining vehicle repair workshop with a simulator can make the working setup come alive.

But the biggest part of the world is its people.

And in any small town, you need a wide selection. The miners, their wives and partners, a few dodgy dealers, a possible romantic interest, the quiet ones and the brash.

The victim, the murderer and the red herrings. The ones that keep it all running smoothly.

All based on the folk you might see in your neighbourhood, living their lives in this new environment. The only difference is that they've been moved an average of 900 million miles away, or 5-8 days by Centi-Drive.

Next time, the bonus content will tell you a little more about the various other locations in the series and how I tried to make them feel realistic.



A bit more about me.

I spent my working life connected with ships. Either sailing the world on them or piloting them on the River Thames.

Since I retired from full-time work, as well as writing, I read, cook and walk along the coast near my home in South Devon.

It's a beautiful part of the country.

In case you're interested, as well as Andorra Pett, I also write Science Fiction, Steampunk and Psychological Thrillers. You can find more about them by clicking the button.

Novels by Richard Dee

In case you didn't know, audio versions of the first two Andorra Pett books are also available via Audible.

You can hear chapter one of *Andorra Pett and the Oort Cloud Café* and *Andorra Pett on Mars* [here](#).

Audiobooks.

I hope you enjoyed that. Next month, I'll be back with more news and extra content. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or just want to chat about Andorra and her world, reply to this email. I'm always happy to hear from you.

Happy Reading.

Richard.

